

National Physical Therapy Month Celebrated

October was National Physical Therapy Month and several Army physical therapy clinics conducted activities to recognize the profession and highlight the contributions Army physical therapists make to the AMEDD.

The **Fort Carson** PT clinic conducted an Open House on the 16 October. Activities included a 10-point physical therapy quiz consisting of questions ranging from naming the 4 rotator cuff muscles to referral guidelines to PT. The prize was a PT month T-shirt. The clinic also conducted a carpal tunnel screening using Nerve Conduction Velocity testing. Personal fitness stations covering topics on injury prevention, posture, flexibility, and running shoes and a back health station were also on display. A crowd of more than 150 participants enjoyed some PT month cake and refreshing Gatorade.

Fort Hood organized an Open House for patients and providers in the PT Clinic for 2 hours over the lunch period. Six interactive stations were established so providers and patients could experience first hand what PT offers regarding evidence-based care. It was a great opportunity for the PT staff to interact and educate the hospital staff about what physical therapists do for patients. The physical therapy staff purchased T-shirts designed by the staff which were worn for "Casual Friday" and other special activity days such as Retiree Day and the Open House.

Retiree Day activities included setting up interactive stations to assess participants balance, posture, home safety, and to provide safety checks on assistive devices and replaced defective parts. In addition, the PT staff wrote several articles in the post newspaper on the history of the physical therapy profession, Army physical therapy, and the services available to beneficiaries. They also decorated bulletin boards in the PT clinic and throughout the hospital. The staff also posted information on the hospital Internet and Intranet Sites about physical therapy month activities.

The staff also provided an in-service to their Physician Assistant colleagues on how to effectively access PT services and what PT had to offer during upcoming deployments to Iraq. Another in-service was scheduled to go review a new handbook that the PT Clinic developed for the PA's and other providers deploying to assist in evaluating and treating uncomplicated musculoskeletal conditions such as anterior knee pain and shoulder impingement. The new handbook, called "Physical Therapy Handbook for Physician Assistants", was well received by the PA's, especially since the booklet fits easily into a BDU pocket and contains basic exercises with written instructions and pictures. The staff also made copies on CDROMs to give the PAs.

Anyone interested in the booklet and CDROM can contact the Ft. Hood PT Clinic.

The **WRAMC** PT clinic conducted a PT fair consisting of community education on ergonomics, a back class, physical agent use, orientation to aqua therapy and vestibular therapy, postural screens, and free ice massages. They also submitted articles to the *Stripe*, the WRAMC newspaper, on the history of Army PTs and the role of the active duty physical therapist in the military health care system. A weekly information table was placed in the main lobby of WRAMC that was manned by clinicians and other staff members to pass out informational literature and show pictures of activities mounted on an informational poster. WRAMC also conducted “PT Month Olympics” between various services in the Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation with teams from PT, OT, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, the Gait Lab/ Orthotics and Prosthetics shop. Events included:

- Specimen cup relays
- Wheel chair slalom
- Triathlon of tricycle race, exam stool serpentine, and basketball free throw with non-dominant hand on compliant surface
- Vestibular Obstacle course (compliant surfaces, steps, cones, inclines, spinning discs after 5 rotations with head on straight cane to allow for appropriate disorientation.

A blood drive was also done in conjunction with the blood donor center WRAMC resulting in 25 whole blood donors and 5 platelet donors.

BAMC had a booth on fall prevention at the annual Ft. Sam Houston Retiree Fair providing information to over 200 participants. They also provided a booth on running shoes and injury prevention and taught a recurrent 20 minute class on knee pain and injury prevention at the annual Ft. Sam Houston Health Fair, providing information to 70 people, while teaching the 20 minute class to a group of special population physical training soldiers as well.

Ft Riley conducted a "Feet in Motion" clinic at the post exchange on 25 October. A booth was set up outside the PX where they conducted foot analysis, running shoe anatomy, and running shoe/ walking shoe selection education. The PX provided shoes to use as models and also a free pair that were awarded to the winner of a “PT Fun Facts” test. Over 140 people participated during the 6 hour display. The clinic received many positive responses to the clinic and a several inquiries were made the following week from people that heard about the display from friends.

TAMC hosted a fitness-themed open house for all medical center staff and patients. The open house consisted of six stations, including fitness testing, body composition, posture assessment, balance screening, strength and flexibility testing, and running shoe recommendations. Participants also got to meet the physical therapy staff, tour the clinic, and enjoy refreshments. Planning for the PT Month open house started several months in advance and included a fundraising bake sale and distributing “For Your Health” magazines and fitness brochures to 50 different clinics at TAMC, promoting good health and inviting individuals to attend the open house. The PT staff coordinated with the Provost Marshall, Health Promotions, and Public Affairs office to advertise and promote the activities, which included electronic advertisements at the front gates, posters at each

hospital entrance, displays in the dining facility, and advertisements in the hospital newspaper. Over 200 people attended, with one participant stating it was “by far the best open house” he had ever been to.